

[Escape from the Indians]

Dup

Cut off from the outer world by her blindness, Mrs. Tafoye, aged nearly 100, lives in her little adobe house back from the highway near Cleveland, New Mex. When the boys and girls went to her for reminiscences her old face lighted. She had been living in the past for so many years that she was glad to have an audience for the thoughts that ordinarily surge through her mind.

"Yes, my brother Jose, he was captured by Indians, Shall I tell you that?"

"Yes, yes, please do."

"Well, one day Jose was at El Rio del Pueblo when he was surrounded by a band of Indians who took him captive. But Jose, he watch close so as to find his way home again. The Indians were good to my brother, treated him kindly, and kept him for a year and a half to take care of their horses.

One day, however, he saw the savages put up two poles on which they tied a captive and built a fire under him. Jose was so frightened that he wanted to escape right away. He had been so long with the Indians that they did not watch him any more. He knew their habits so well that when he saw they were starting out to hunt he knew they would be gone several days; and as all the horses were away he would be left to help the squaws in the fields. Soon after the men left he took his wooden hoe and left the squaws around the camp. Once out of sight he threw down the hoe and started for home.

"Back at camp his escape was discovered and an Indian runner sped to the hunters, who came in prompt pursuit. A long stretch of plain lay before Juan. He could hear the whoops of the Indians in the forest behind. There was no shelter for the boy except a large rock

Library of Congress

about 100 yards away. 'Oh, Saint Anthony, help me:' cried Jose. He hurried forward and crept under the rock. The fleet horses of the Indians were soon heard approaching. round and around they rode, then went away a little distance, returned and rode around again, but they did not see Jose. At last they rode away. Jose waited until dark, then calling on his Saint Anthony again he ran toward home.

"The next morning after my brother had gone to a neighbor's house, my sister and I were very much frightened to see an Indian standing at our door. He had long bone earrings and was very dirty. Then Jose spoke and asked us if we did not know him. We were so happy. I ran for my mother but did not tell her why I wanted her. c18- C18-6/5/41 - N. Mex.

She did not know my brother either. When he spoke, she knew his voice and cried for joy. When he had cleaned himself, she took the old bone earrings and gave him a pair of silver ones, which we wore the rest of his life."